

REMARKS

At the time the present Office Action was mailed (February 1, 2007), claims 1-20 were pending. In this response, claim 12 has been cancelled, and claims 1-11 and 13-20 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 1-11 and 13-20 are currently pending.

In the February 1, 2007, Office Action, all the pending claims were rejected. More specifically, the status of the application in light of the February 1, 2007 Office Action is as follows:

(A) It was noted that a copy of the certified copy of the priority document was not in the Patent Office file;

(B) The specification was objected to due to based on informalities;

(C) Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph;

(D) Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by any of U.S. Patent No. 6,374,963, or U.S. Publication No. 2002/0033308, or International Publication No. WO96/01380 to Xie ("Xie"); and

(E) Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,508,336 to El-Kassouf ("El-Kassouf").

The following remarks respond to each of the topics identified above.

A. Response to the Claim for Foreign Priority

Enclosed herewith is a copy of the certified copy of the priority document for the present application.

B. Response to the Objections to the Specification

Paragraph [00156] was objected to based on an informality. This paragraph has been amended to correct the informality, as have paragraphs [00124] and [00125]. Accordingly, the outstanding objection to the specification should be withdrawn.

C. Response to the Section 112, Second Paragraph Rejection

Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, on the basis of the following phrases: "a press engagement arrangement," "operable," "associated with," and "are associated." Claim 1 has been amended to eliminate these phrases and replace them with phrases more clearly identifying the relationship between the claimed elements. In so doing, applicants use the phrase "coupled" to mean any of a wide variety of possible couplings which may include, but are not limited to, a direct connection. Claims 2-11 and 13-20, which depend from claim 1, have been amended for improved readability and to eliminate instances of the phrases identified above. Claim 1 has also been amended to clarify the antecedent basis for instances of the phrase "concave-convex assembly." In light of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Section 112 rejections of claims 1-11 and 13-20 should be withdrawn. Claim 12 has been cancelled, so the Section 112 rejection of claim 12 is now moot.

D. Response to the Section 102(b) Rejections

Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by several references to Xie. Claim 1 has been amended to include elements of claim 12, which has been cancelled. In particular, claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the first concave-convex assembly has a first helicoid engaging surface, and the second concave-convex assembly has a second helicoid engaging surface engaged with the first helicoid engaging surface. Support for this feature is included at, *inter alia*, Figure 29 of the application as filed, and the associated text. In addition to providing the claimed axial displacement arrangements identified in claim 1, embodiments of a coupling device that include the

engaged helicoid surfaces can compensate for axial errors in the initial assembly of the coupling device, more evenly distribute pressure within the device, stabilize the device during operation, and/or reduce noise associated with operation of the device. Accordingly, the device can be more reliable, e.g., as a result of compensating for potential axial positioning errors, and/or as a result of more even loading, which can reduce the likelihood for over-temperature failures.

The applied Xie references disclose several brake and/or clutch arrangements. Without commenting on or characterizing in any way the scope of the claims in the Xie references, none of the applied Xie references appear to disclose the helicoid engaging features as claimed in claim 1. For at least this reason, the Section 102 rejection of claim 1 on the basis of the Xie references should be withdrawn.

Claim 12 has been cancelled, so the Section 102 rejection of claim 12 on the basis of the Xie references is now moot. Claims 2-11 and 13-20 depend from claim 1. Accordingly, the Section 102 rejection of these claims on the basis of the Xie references should be withdrawn for the foregoing reasons and for the additional features of these dependent claims.

E. Response to the Section 102(e) Rejection

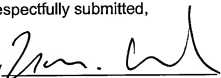
Claims 1-20 were also rejected under Section 102(e) as being anticipated by El-Kassouf. El-Kassouf also fails to disclose or suggest at least a first concave-convex assembly having a first helicoid engaging surface, and a second concave-convex assembly having a second helicoid engaging surface engaged with the first helicoid engaging surface arranged in the claimed manner. Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reason, the Section 102 rejections of claims 1-11 and 13-20 on the basis of El-Kassouf should be withdrawn. The Section 102 rejection of claim 12 is now moot, as claim 12 has been cancelled.

F. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the pending claims comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable over the applied art. The applicant accordingly requests reconsideration of the application and a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone interview would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned attorney at (206) 359-3257.

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Respectfully submitted,

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